

NWS Form E-5 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MONTHLY REPORT OF RIVER AND FLOOD CONDITIONS	HYDROLOGIC SERVICE AREA: Pocatello, Idaho
	REPORT FOR: MONTH: March YEAR: 2005
	SIGNATURE Sherrie Hebert: (In Charge of Hydrologic Service Area)
TO: Hydrologic Operations Division, W/OH2 National Weather Service National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Silver Spring, Maryland 20910	DATE April 5, 2005
When no flooding occurs, include miscellaneous river conditions, such as significant rises, record low stages, ice conditions, snow cover, droughts and hydrologic products issued (NWS Instruction 10-924).	
X	An X in this box indicates that no flooding has occurred for the month within this hydrologic service area.

March did the opposite of what the saying is, as it came in lamb and left like a lion, leaving near to well-above normal precipitation over much of Eastern Idaho. However, as much of a lion that did present itself, it wasn't strong enough to make up for the severe lack of precipitation that has plagued the area most of winter.

Other Hydrologic Interests

Precipitation

March precipitation for the Pocatello HSA was 79.8% of normal for 34 of 42 reporting stations with climate data, according to Western Region Climate Center data. More than half of the reporting stations' precipitation was near or above normal, with 18 of those stations receiving 100% or greater than normal amounts. The stations topping the list are in the table below.

Station Name	Precip (inches)	Normal (inches)	Percent of Normal
Howe	0.83	0.47	176.6
Picabo	2.02	1.19	169.7
Richfield	1.63	1.02	159.8

A number of stations also set or tied daily precipitation records, which are below.

March 23

- BYU Rexburg: 0.62 inches of rain; beat old record of 0.50 inches set in 1988
- Pocatello: 0.45 inches of rain; beat old record of 0.31 inches set in 1941
- Challis: 0.19 inches of rain; beat old record of 0.12 inches set in 1945
- Stanley: 0.40 inches of rain; beat old record of 0.26 inches set in 1971

March 28

- Burley: 0.40 inches of rain; beat old record of 0.29 inches set in 1988

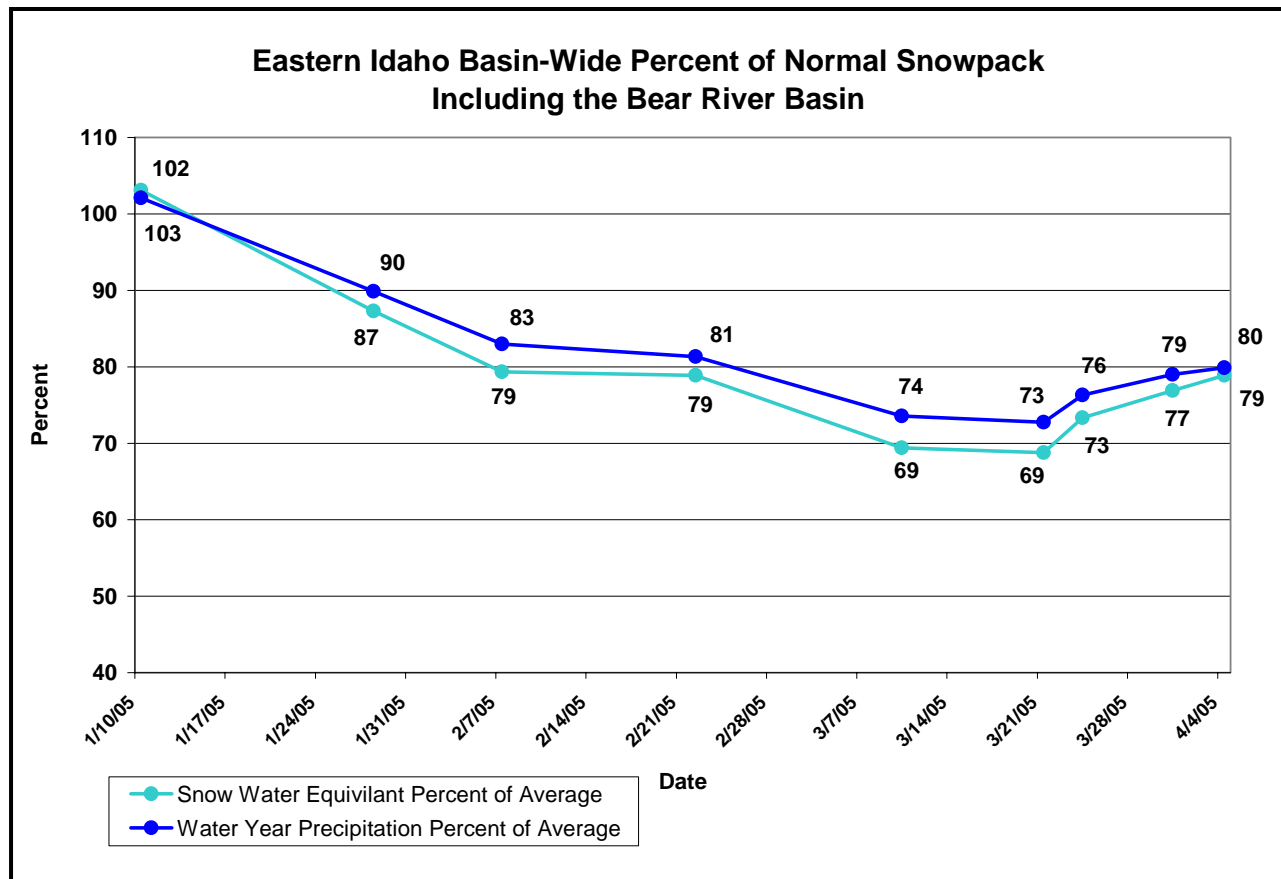
March 29

- Burley: 0.18 inches of rain; beat old record of 0.15 inches set in 1974

Two stations did receive below normal precip for the month: Minidoka Dam at 43.0% and Chilly Barton Flats at 41.9%.

Snowpack

The lion of March did allow for a slight increase in snowpack for Eastern Idaho. However, the consistent decline in snowpack since the beginning of January far outweighs any improvements. As the graph below indicates, precipitation was above normal the beginning of January and rapidly dwindled to a low of 69% of normal for the 2005 Water Year and has risen to the current 79%.



Reservoirs

The Upper Snake River reservoir system is at 56% of capacity¹, up 7% from March 10, 2005.

Reservoir	% Capacity February 28 ²	% Capacity March 31 ³	Percent Change	% of Average ³	% of Last Year ³
American Falls	70	84	14	97	112
Bear Lake	10	3	-7	4	20
Blackfoot	11	11	0	17	100
Henry's Lake	74	77	3	81	97
Island Park	64	70	6	83	102
Little Wood	52	69	17	106	89
Mackay	51	82	31	111	154
Magic	13	19	6	34	76
Oakley	19	24	5	51	122
Palisades	45	51	6	75	117
Ririe	41	45	4	86	109
Lake Walcott	19 ⁴	23 ⁵	4	n/a	n/a

Source: (1) US Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), April 4, 2005; (2) NRCS, February 28, 2005; (3) NRCS, March 31, 2005; (4) BOR, March 10, 2005; (5) BOR, April 4, 2005.

Drought

Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne recently declared the first emergency drought declarations for 2005. Butte and Custer Counties were the first on the list, dated March 28, due to low stream flow forecasts and low reservoirs.

Eastern Idaho also remains entirely in the D3, "Extreme" and D4, "Exceptional" categories on the US Drought Monitor. Low soil moisture, low SWSI values, and above-normal temperature and below-normal precipitation outlooks leave little to no room for relief in the near future.

Hydrologic Product Summary

No hydrologic products were issued in January.

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